Village Unions.

487. * MR. N. D. PARAMESWARAN NAMBOODIRI (*The Travancore Jenmies—North*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) the number of Village Unions in Travancore; and

(*b*) the total amount of grant given to the Village Unions in 1120 and 1121?

RAJYASEVANIRATA DR. M. K. GOPALA PILLAI: (*Registrar of Village Unions and Panchayats*): (*a*) 50.

(*b*) Rs. 15,264 in 1120 and Rs. 24,547 in 1121.

MR. V. I. IDICULLA (*Pathanamthitta*): പത്തനംതിട്ട താലൂക്കിൽ ഏതു വില്ലേജ് യൂണിയൻ ഉണ്ടെന്നു പറയാമോ?

RAJYASEVANIRATA DR. M. K. GOPALA PILLAI: ഒ വില്ലേജ് യൂണിയൻ ഉണ്ട്.

MR. N. D. PARAMESWARAN NAMBOODIRI: May I know the nature of the Village Unions' work?

RAJYASEVANIRATA DR. M. K. GOPALA PILLAI: The Village Unions are interested in various activities. They are engaged in public works; they are interested in construction and improvement of wells, by-roads, bunds, channels and bridges. Again, they are very much interested in organisation of midwifery services, lighting, scavenging, sweeping, making of compost manure and in such places where electricity is available, installation of electric lights, etc. Further they are getting themselves interested in intensive food production, agriculture and cottage industries. Recently, they have become very much interested in the "Grow More Food Campaign" They are supplied with vegetable seeds. Further, many village unions have opened manure-depots for the supply of manure. They are also maintaining stud-bulls for the breeding of good species of cattle. By way of cottage industries, most of the village unions are interested in Poultry, Bee-Keeping, etc. Some of the unions are giving grants for Public Works etc. In many others, installation of community radio sets is being arranged. Some are asking for lands for parks, and play-grounds.

MR. P. O. THOMAS: May I know the factors taken into consideration in allowing grants to the Village Unions—I mean the basis on which the grants are paid.

RAJYASEVANIRATA DR. M. K. GOPALA PILLAI: The procedure is that as soon as a Village Union is formed the Government make a grant of Rs. 500. Subsequent grants depend upon the amount which the Union collects as tax and other items of income.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara* cum *Trivandrum*): Will the honourable member be pleased to state the name of one Village Union near the city of Trivandrum in which all or a major portion of these works are being done, so that we may visit that Union?

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RAJYASEVANIRATA DR. M. K. GOPALA PILLAI: Sir, I would recall my statement. I never said that every village union takes to all these works.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: May we have the name of one Village Union in the State where substantially all these works are carried out?

RAJYASEVANIRATA DR. M. K. GOPALA PILLAI: Well, Pulincunnu is one such instance. They have made roads. They have provided midwifery services. They have appointed their own boatmen for ferries. In the Kumarakom Village Union they have constructed many roads and have installed many lights. In a place near Quilon, called Thrikovilvattam, the Village Union has built roads. I can cite instances like that.

MR. V. I. IDICULLA: In the Pathanamthitta Taluk, may I know how many Village Unions are there?

RAJYASEVANIRATA DR. M. K. GOPALA PILLAI: There are two.

MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI (*Thiruvalla*): May I know whether there is any Village Union where sanction is being accorded for the installation of electric lights?

RAJYASEVANIRATA DR. M. K. GOPALA PILLAI: Sir, Chengannur Village Union is one.

MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI: May I know the action taken for street lighting there?

RAJYASEVANIRATA DR. M. K. GOPALA PILLAI: Sanction has been granted by the Government. They are waiting for certain materials.

MR. K. M. PAUL: May I know whether Government are aware that there are some village unions which have got sufficient funds at their disposal but which do no public utility works?

RAJYASEVANIRATA DR. M. K. GOPALA PILLAI: It all depends upon the personnel.

PRESIDENT: Order, order. This requires local sympathy and local cooperation. All the village unions have got non-official personnel. They are now allowed to elect their own presidents, and it is up to them to carry out public utility projects. A certain amount has been provided in the budget and a further sum would be given to them under the new arrangement announced here. It is entirely for them to do the work. It is to be seen whether local enthusiasm is forthcoming for the purpose of utilising that fund. I am perfectly willing to sanction the amount to the public health or to any other department, and they will be asked to have nothing to do with its manner of spending. I believe the matter has been told to the Director of Public Health. The Village Unions will have to do everything with the fairly large amounts placed at their disposal. They will have to work with their own personnel provided the work is audited at one stage or other by the proper authorities. The year's experiment will show exactly what they can do.

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